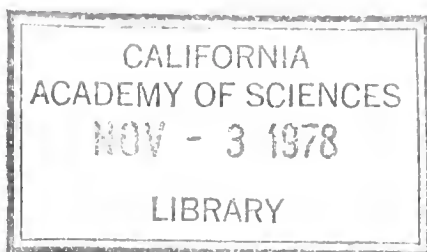


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# the gull

Volume 60

Berkeley, Calif.

November 1978

Number 10

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## Why are there Birders?

Our November program will feature Don Roberson, a local expert birder, former editor of the observations column in *The Gull* and author of the book, *BIRDERS' CALIFORNIA, How to build a California Year List and an account of just such an undertaking*.

In a brief introduction, Don will discuss what birding is as generally defined and he will also talk about that part of birding which involves listing.

The main part of the evening will be devoted to Don's suggestions on where to go and how to look for birds in California with as emphasis on seeking rarities. He will show slides which will include many of the rare birds he has seen and he will also talk about some of the other people who look for birds throughout the state.

You are invited to attend the program which will be held Thursday evening, November 9, at 7:30 p.m. at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley.

## Field Trips Calendar

**Sunday, November 12 — Miwok Trail, Ft. Cronkhite** on the Marin Headlands. A 5 mile hike to see the common birds of hillside and chaparral including Great Horned Owl and hawks. Driving north across the Golden Gate Bridge, take the Alexander St. exit, turn left  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile and meet at the parking lot near the entrance to the tunnel at 9 a.m. Bring lunch in a knapsack to eat on the trail. Leader: Pat Triggs (664-8502).  
(✓)

**Wednesday, November 15** — Mini trip to **Alameda Southshore** for shorebirds and other waterfowl. Meet at the foot of Broadway in Alameda at **9:30 a.m.** Lunch optional. Leader: Paul Covel (530-2513).

**Thursday, November 23** — **Traditional Thanksgiving outing.** Meet at **10 a.m.** at the parking lot of Pt. Reyes National Seashore on Bear Valley Road for a trip to Limantour Spit and vicinity to see a variety of shorebirds and waterfowl. Bring sturdy boots, a light lunch, and plan to join us for a moderately priced dinner (about \$5) in late afternoon. Leader: Barry Spitz (454-2769) (✓)

**Tuesday, November 28** — Mini trip to **Lake Merced** in San Francisco. Meet at **9 a.m.** at the North Lake parking lot at the south end of Sunset Blvd., accessible by #72 Muni bus. Lunch optional. Leader: Naomi Svenningsen (584-6233).

**In the future** — In December a trip is being planned to Sacramento Valley wildlife refuges.

**Extended Field Trips** (GGAS Tours for 1979) — The Galapagos and Peru trip, August 2-23, 1979 has been cancelled. The Africa trip to Tanzania and Madagascar for June or November, 1979 is still under consideration.

**Carpooling:** You can arrange carpooling for trips marked with a (✓). If you are not an enthusiast about driving or want a passenger or two to share expenses, please call Kate Partridge at work (642-5784, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.). Passengers should be willing to share all expenses incident to the trips including mileage and any fees that may arise.

—FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

## September Observations

### Through September 26

A new feature of this column will be an announced termination date for each writing. Later observations (plus reports received too late for inclusion) should be sought in the subsequent *Gull*.

Compared to recent Septembers this month was very dull. The "blue-bird weather" of Indian Summer vanquished the few weak frontal systems, causing hawk and vagrant flights to be mediocre to poor, in both number and species diversity. The following summary shows that many regular rarities were unreported. Hopefully October will be an improvement. As always, most Point Reyes observations are listed by site.

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## BEYOND THE SURF

Sixteen Red-necked Grebes along Drakes Beach (JiM) and three more at Limantour (JM) on Sept. 3 further indicate this species' preference for this area in early fall. In contrast to most pelagics, albatrosses are least common in fall. Four Black-footed Albatrosses were in Monterey Bay Sept. 17 (RROS, GGAS pelagic trips). A large feeding flock contained two Flesh-footed Shearwaters the same day (BDP, RROS, SFB, GGAS). Short-tailed Shearwaters have been found dead in August, but one or two in Monterey Bay Aug. 27 represent our earliest fall sight record (RS). The afternoon gale of Sept. 17 blew a Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel into Monterey Harbor (RSu, JEa). Sharp eyes found two Xantus' Murrelets among Monterey Bay swells Sept. 27 (BDP).

## RAPTORS

The trickle of migrant hawks included almost exclusively common species, and no Broad-winged Hawks were reported.

## SHORES AND FIELDS

American Golden Plovers stopped at typical coastal locations, including several on Pt. Reyes. The maximum was six on Sept. 24 in a plowed field beside the RCA Station, Pt. Reyes (JP). This same field held two Mountain Plovers on Sept. 11 (EM), with one remaining through Sept. 21 (BR). Solitary Sandpipers were detected at the mouth of the Carmel River Sept. 9 (JLa) and on Mines Road, Santa Clara County Sept. 16 (CH). On Sept. 10 a Red Knot was at the Woodland Sugar Ponds, where it is rare (CC). As the coastal Baird's Sandpipers and Lesser Yellowlegs thinned out they were replaced by Pectoral Sandpipers. The early peak of Pectorals was fourteen at the mouth of the Carmel River Sept. 16 (BDP). Well-described Semipalmated Sandpipers were reported from the Mendoza Ranch pond Sept. 11 (EM) and Limantour Sept. 12 (NS, *fide* RS). Several other Semipalmated Sandpipers were found elsewhere in California about the same time. A female **Ruff** ("Reeve") found at Limantour Aug. 31 remained through Sept. 3 (mob). The Tomales Point flock of **Buff-Breasted Sandpipers** lingered well past August, eight remained to Sept. 3 (JiM) and four to Sept. 10 (BY). Additional Buff-breasted Sandpipers appeared at Manchester Beach, Mendocino Co. Sept. 3 (BB) and at the mouth of the Salinas River Sept. 3 (EM). Arctic Terns continue to occur each fall at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza, with two there Sept. 17 (PG).

## VAGRANT LANDBIRDS

A pair of White-winged Doves adorned Carmel River Mouth Sept. 9 (JLa) and one was seen again Sept. 17 (SFB). Other intrastate vagrants included Lewis' and Acorn Woodpeckers. Both species were noted at several locations on Pt. Reyes, in Golden Gate Park, and at the

Pt. Diablo hawk lookout. Acorn Woodpeckers are also frequenting the Berkeley Hills. Minor coastal irruptions of the Lewis' Woodpecker are common, but the coincident flight of the more sedentary Acorn Woodpecker indicate an acorn shortage or severe population pressure somewhere in northern California.

By far the best bird in our area was California's first **Yellow Wagtail** at Abbott's Lagoon, Pt. Reyes on Sept. 17 (JPM) but gone within hours. Familiar with this species in Alaska, Pete Myers identified the Wagtail by call before he saw it. The month's total of eight Red-eyed Vireos is astounding considering the paucity of other vagrants:

1 Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 3	JIM
1 Fish Docks	Sept. 10-14	KY, JMcG, et al.
1 Fort Funston, S.F.	Sept. 15	DMu
1 Carmel River mouth	Sept. 16	BDP, et al.
1 Fish Docks	Sept. 19	mob
1 Pt. Reyes Lighthouse	Sept. 24	BH, mob
1 Battery Wallace, GGNRA	Sept. 24	DMo
1 Carmel River mouth	Sept. 24	EM, et al.

The Farallones' best vagrant was a **Philadelphia Vireo** on Sept. 22 (PRBO).

The only Black-and-White Warbler was at the mouth of the Carmel River Sept. 16 (DEI). Contrasting with twenty-three Tennessee Warblers in Sept. 1977, we had two: Sept. 12 at Drakes Beach (TB) and Sept. 24 at the mouth of the Carmel River (EM, et al.). For Virginia's Warbler two is a better number: Mendoza Ranch Sept. 12 (A & WG) and Middle Lake, Golden Gate Park Sept. 17 (EM) through Sept. 22 (JMcG). The three Magnolia Warblers came late in the month: Sept. 19 at Nunes Ranch (TB, A & WG), another there Sept. 24 (JP), and Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 25 (RS). The trees beside Rodeo Lagoon hosted a **Black-throated Green Warbler** on Sept. 24 (DMu). The three Chestnut-sided Warblers were all inland from the outermost vagrant traps: Laguna Ranch Sept. 13 (JEv), Five Brooks, Marin Co. Sept. 16 (RS), and Pioneer Log Cabin, Golden Gate Park Sept. 21 (DEd). Blackpoll Warblers merely equalled Red-eyed Vireos:

1 Mendoza Ranch	Sept. 6	A & WG
1 Olema Marsh	Sept. 16	JEv
2 Fish Docks	Sept. 17 (1 Sept. 16, 18-23)	mob
1 Mendoza Ranch	Sept. 20	HG
1 Mendoza Ranch	Sept. 24	AG
1 El Carmelo Cemetery, Pacific Grove	Sept. 24	EM, et al.
1 Mendoza Ranch	Sept. 26	mob

The San Mateo County coast continues to produce Prairie Warblers in September. One was found at Ano Nuevo Reserve Sept. 12 (CB). Marin County answered with one near Nunes Ranch Sept. 25 (RS). A



Palm Warbler on the Farallones Sept. 20 (PRBO) and another at Nunes Ranch Sept. 25 (RS) comprised the vanguard of this late fall vagrant. The only Northern Waterthrush visited the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse on Sept. 3 (JiM). A Yellow-breasted Chat at Middle Lake, Golden Gate Park from Sept. 13 (KY) to Sept. 17 (DM) was a rare migrant. This month's nine American Redstarts were below expectations:

1 Spaletta Ranch	Sept. 4	mob
2 Middle Lake, G.G.P.	Sept. 6	BF
1 N end Bolinas Lagoon	Sept. 16	RS
1 Farallones	Sept. 5-6	PRBO
4 Carmel River mouth	Sept. 24	EM, et al.

Bobolinks were present at the mouth of the Carmel River Sept. 10 (JLu) and Sept. 16 (BH). A male Yellow-headed Blackbird at the Drakes Beach pond Sept. 26 (JD) was unusual on the coast. The notable orioles were a female Orchard at Lincoln Park, S.F., Sept. 9-10 (DEd) and a "Baltimore" Northern on the Farallones Sept. 5 (PRBO). Marin Audubon found a male Summer Tanager on a county round-up day ("blitz") at Nicasio Sept. 26 (KY, DMcC, JEv, DB). Only two Rose-breasted Grosbeaks could be found: Drakes Beach Sept. 12 (RLeV, *fide* RS) and Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 24 (HW, JM). A pair of Clay-colored Sparrows on the Farallones Sept. 19, one remaining to Sept. 21 (PRBO), was followed by another Clay-colored and a Brewer's Sparrow near Nunes Ranch on Sept. 25 (RS). The fall's first White-throated Sparrow found the Pt. Reyes Lighthouse Sept. 19 (AG).

**Observers:** Stephen F. Bailey (SFB), Dennis Beall (DB), Craig Benkman (CB), Tony Briggs (TB), Betty Burrige (BB), Mary Carriger (MC), Clarence Crisp (CCP), Jane Dang (JD), David Edwards (DEd), Doug Ellis (DEl), Joe Eaton (JEa), Jules Evens (JEv), Bud Fry (BF), Al and Wilma Ghiorso (A & WG), Doug Gomke (DG), Phil Gordon (PG), Helen Green (HG), Bob Hirt (BH), Craig Hohenberger (CH), Jeri Langham (JLa), Ron LeValley (RLeV), John Luther (JLu), Eugene Makishima (EM), Diane McClung (DMcC), Joe McGee (JMcG), Carolyn Merchant (CM), many observers (mob), Doug Morton (DMo), Joe Morlan (JM), Jim Morris (JiM), Dan Murphy (DMu), J.P. Myers (JPM), B.D. Parmeter (BDP), John Parmeter (JP), Pt. Reyes Bird Observatory (PRBO), Bill Pursell (BP), Bob Richmond (BR), Nancy Smith (NS), Redwood Region Ornithological Society (RROS), Rich Stallcup (RS), Ron Sullivan (RSu), Harry White, Jr. ((HW), Keiko Yamane (KY), and Bob Yutzy (BY).

—STEPHEN F. BAILEY, *Observations Editor*  
Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California,  
Berkeley, CA 94720 (548-9507)

## Oakland Christmas Bird Count

The 1978 Oakland Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for Sunday, December 17, and we are hoping to maintain our stature as a national leader in this traditional Audubon Society event.

Last year's count included 223 observers who accumulated 546 party hours and found 175 species. How these figures compare with other counts can only be guessed as national compilation figures have not been released. We do know that totals for ten species exceeded national highs for the previous year and our total for the Common (Red-shafted) Flicker should establish a new national record.

The success of the count depends on each team having a good leader, helpful spotters and an accurate recorder. Experience in a count area is extremely valuable and it would be most helpful if each of last years participants would volunteer to take the same area as last year. We also want to invite any birders who did not participate last year to join in the count. There is always a need for additional birders and helpers.

Feeder coverage is also extremely important. It is the feeders that have given us many of our national records for high species counts. The feeders also attract and keep rarities. If you have a feeder in your yard and will be able to keep a tally of birds, if even for a few minutes, please contact Susan Hilinski at 841-6253.

If you are interested in participating in the field count or want more information, call Malcolm Sproul at 479-1100, ext. 2526 (work) or 841-3086 (home). If you are unable to contact a count organizer leave word at the GGAS office (843-2222) and we will get in touch with you.

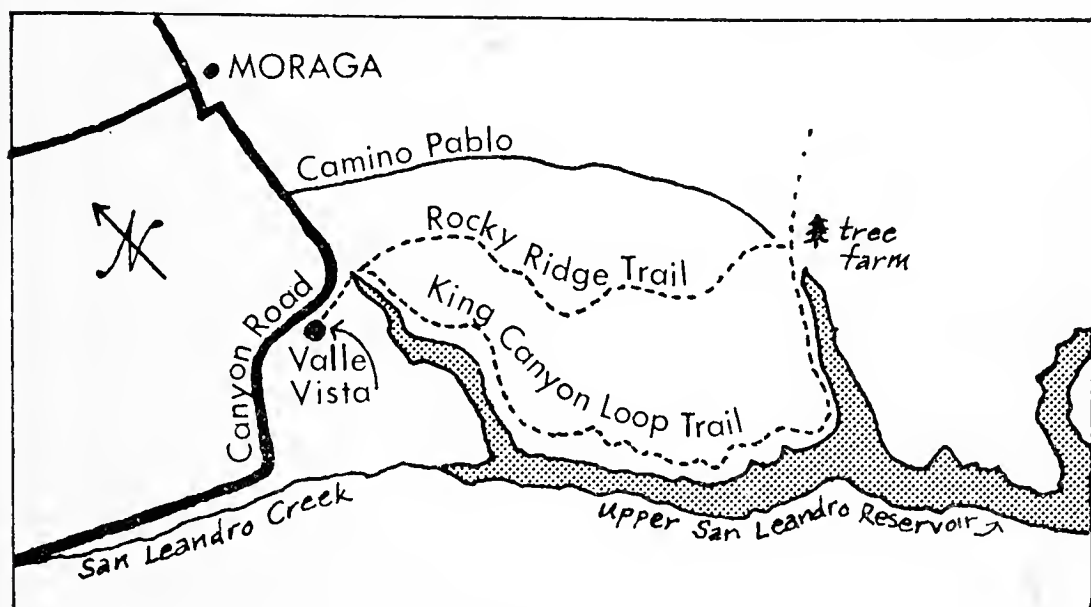
The get-together after the count for dinner and tallying will be held at a place to be announced in the December *Gull*. Remember that this meeting will be in place of our general membership meeting for December.

—MALCOLM SPROUL  
*Christmas Count Compiler*

## Birding King Canyon

In 1973 the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) opened over 50 miles of trails on its land. Although much of the natural landscape of the East Bay has been altered drastically, most of EBMUD's 27,000 acres remain relatively undisturbed.

One of twelve trails created by the water company, the King Canyon Loop Trail begins at the Valle Vista staging area approximately one mile southwest of Moraga (see map). An extremely pleasant walking trail,



it transects a variety of habitat types permitting one to view many of the birds characteristic of Bay Area grasslands, chaparral and evergreen woodland. Although it does not feature vegetational stands which tend to concentrate uncommon or rare species, the mosaic of habitat types along the trail produces an edge effect which increases the diversity of bird species. Approximately 50 species are permanent residents and birding throughout the year will provide additional migratory species.

From the parking area at Valle Vista the trail skirts an area of open grassland bordered on one side by a stand of Monterey Pine and on the other by chaparral-woodland. Here one may observe Golden Eagles (resident), Say's Phoebes (spring, fall), Ash-throated Flycatchers (summer) and Canada Geese (winter).

From open grassland one abruptly enters a Monterey Pine forest where White-breasted Nuthatches (resident) and Red-breasted Nuthatches (winter), Western Flycatchers (summer), Yellow-rumped Warblers (winter) and Chestnut-backed Chickadees (resident) will be encountered during the year. After winding for approximately a quarter mile through the pines the trail crosses a small tongue of the Upper San Leandro Reservoir. As you leave the pine forest approaching the bridge there is a thicket of willow along the edge of the reservoir. I have always found this to be a good area to observe Wilson's Warblers (spring, fall) and Western Tanagers (spring, fall).

After crossing the bridge the trail parallels (although does not approach very close to) the reservoir for about one half mile. Along this section of King Canyon Loop Trail a narrow belt of Monterey Pine extends between the reservoir and the trail. At the end of the pine belt the

trail is at its closest point (within 20 yards) to the reservoir and one can view Common Goldeneyes (winter), Ring-necked Ducks (winter), Ruddy Ducks (winter), Double-crested Cormorants (resident) and Caspian Terns (summer). Osprey (spring) and Whistling Swans (winter) have been observed here, though infrequently.

From this point the trail winds through an area of open grassland with a few scattered trees including fruit trees. In the late summer these fruit trees attract Northern Orioles (summer) and Black-headed Grosbeaks (summer) as well as other species.

The trail then climbs uphill into dense evergreen woodland. Varied Thrush (winter), Townsend's Warblers (winter), Hutton's Vireo (resident) and Red-breasted Sapsuckers (winter) frequent this habitat.

For the rest of its length (3-4 miles) the trail winds across rolling hills covered by woodland, chaparral and grassland. It skirts the Upper San Leandro Reservoir to a tree farm. At this point the return trip to Valle Vista can be made along a two mile stretch of the Rocky Ridge Trail. A variety of species including California Thrasher (resident), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (summer), White-throated Swift (summer), Lazuli Bunting (summer) and Black-throated Gray Warbler (spring, fall) can be observed.

The King Canyon Loop Trail is open only to hikers who have EBMUD Trail Use Permits. These can be purchased (\$5 for one year, \$10 for three years) at the Lafayette and San Pablo Recreation Areas as well as at any EBMUD business office.

—LARRY SALATA

## Conservation Notes

Thanks to those of you who wrote in response to the U.S. Forest Service RARE II (Roadless Area Review and Evaluation). The effort you made was very worthwhile.

**National Parks Act.** This summer the House passed the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (H.R. 12536). At this writing the Senate has not yet acted on the bill. If passed, the bill would set aside a number of valuable areas for parks and wilderness. If it has not yet passed, write or call your senators immediately. If possible send a copy to Senator Henry Jackson, Interior Committee Chairman, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510.

The **Yosemite Draft General Management Plan** has just come out and appears encouraging. You must remember however, that another round of public involvement is required before any plan can be finalized. Also, after the National Park Service decides on a final plan, Congress



must provide funding for its implementation. In the near future there will be a series of hearings for the public to provide input. The dates and locations of the meetings will be available soon. Alternatively, you can send your comments to Mr. Leslie P. Arnberger, Superintendent, P.O. Box 577-GMP, Yosemite National Park, CA 95389. If you haven't received a copy of the Draft General Management Plan, there is a copy in the GGAS office which you may read.

—CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

### EBRPD WILL NOT LOG PARKS

On September 19, two weeks after the October *Gull* had gone to press, the East Bay Regional Park District's Board of Directors met and passed a resolution that the District would not grant permission for commercial logging operations in parklands. (See *The Gull*, October, 1978, page 112 for a report on the original proposal to log in Redwood Park.)

### New Books Received by GGAS Library for November

Due to limited space, we cannot review all new books. However, starred books ( \* ) are worthy of readers' special attention.

*Barn Owl*, by Phyllis Flower, Harper & Row, N.Y. 1978

*The Dangers of Noise*,\* by Lucy Kavalier, Thomas Y. Crowell, N.Y. 1978

*Endangered Plants*, by Dorothy Childs Hogner, Thomas Y. Crowell, N.Y., 1977

*The Golden Circle*, by Hal Borland, Thomas Y. Crowell, N.Y. 1977

*Guide to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area*,\* by Dorothy L. Whitnah, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA 1978

*The Hawks of Chelney*, by Adrienne Jones, Harper & Row, N.Y. 1978

*The Hideaway Summer*, by Beverly Hollett Renner, Harper & Row, 1978

*Magis and the Night River*, by Eve Bunting, Harper & Row, N.Y. 1978

*Mouse and Tim*, by Faith McNulty, Harper & Row, N.Y. 1978

*Mustangs: A Return to the Wild*,\* by Hope Ryden, Penguin Books, N.Y. 1972

*The Natural History of the Whale*,\* by L. Harrison Matthews, Columbia University Press, N.Y. 1978. (See review below).

*An Outdoor Guide to the San Francisco Bay Area*,\* by Dorothy L. Whitnah, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA, 1976.

*Redwoods are the Tallest Trees in the World*, by David A. Adler, Thomas Y. Crowell, N.Y. 1978.

*The Secret Life of Harold the Bird Watcher*, by Hilda Colman, Thomas Y. Crowell, N.Y. 1978

*Sierra North - 100 Backcountry Trips*,\* revised edition, by Thomas Winnett, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA, 1976.

*Sierra South - 100 Backcountry Trips*,\* revised edition, by Thomas Winnett and K. Schwenke, Wilderness Press, Berkeley, CA, 1975

*State Flowers*,\* by Anne Ophelia Dowden, Thomas Y. Crowell, N.Y. 1978

*Swan Cove*, by Jane White Canfield, Harper & Row, N.Y., 1978.

## BOOK REVIEW:

*The Natural History of the Whale*, by L. Harrison Matthews

This is an authoritative account of the life histories of all the known species of whales written by a well credentialed British scientist.

All aspects of the whales' lives are detailed including feeding, breeding, migration and social relationships. A number of photographs and drawings add interest and increase our awareness of these fellow mammals, many of whom are on the brink of extinction.

The book should be of special interest to participants of pelagic trips who have had close encounters with these awesome, mysterious creatures.

—LIBRARY COMMITTEE

## Special Members' Discount at The Book Nest

The National Audubon Society has announced that effective September 1, 1978, there will be a 10% discount on most items in the store for members who show their up-to-date membership card at the time of purchase.

With the holiday season ahead of us, keep in mind The Book Nest, located at the Whittell Education Center, 376 Greenwood Beach Rd., Tiburon.

# Gifts and Bequests

## FOR AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

In memory of  
Aubrey (Bob) Porter

Gift of  
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In memory of  
Dr. Harold W. Lambert

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## FOR ALAMEDA-SAN LEANDRO NATURE FUND

In memory of  
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## FOR GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY

In memory of  
Dr. Harold W. Lambert

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Robert and Elizabeth Junge  
Loren P. Meissner

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November 1978

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Send address changes to office promptly; Post Office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership - local and national \$18 per year (individual); \$21 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$4 per year; single issues 40¢. High school and college student membership \$13.50 per year. Senior citizen individual, \$13.50, senior citizen family, \$15.50.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

***The Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.**